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**FEDERAL RESERVE** statistical release

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*Z.1*

*Flow of Funds Accounts  
of the United States*

*Flows and Outstandings  
Fourth Quarter 1998*

## Flow of Funds Summary Statistics Fourth Quarter 1998

Debt of domestic nonfinancial sectors increased at about a 7 percent annual rate in the fourth quarter of 1998, up from the third-quarter pace. Federal government debt was nearly flat in the fourth quarter, following paydowns in each of the preceding three quarters. Nonfederal debt advanced at a 9 percent rate, paced by a jump in household debt to a 10-1/4 percent rate. Home mortgage borrowing rose substantially, and growth of consumer credit, although slower than in the third quarter, remained in the moderate range of the past two years. Business debt expanded at an 8-1/4 percent annual pace in the fourth quarter, down a little from earlier in the year. A slowdown in growth of business loans at banks and a paydown of commercial paper liabilities were partially offset by an increase in issuance of corporate bonds and takedowns of commercial mortgage loans. Debt of state and local governments rose at a 6-1/2 percent rate in the fourth quarter, about in line with the previous two quarters.

For 1998 as a whole, debt rose 6-1/4 percent, the largest increase in eight years. Federal debt contracted nearly 1-1/2 percent last year. But debt in the nonfederal sectors increased 8-3/4 percent, 2 percentage points faster than in 1997.

The level of domestic nonfinancial debt outstanding was \$16.1 trillion at the end of the fourth quarter. Debt of the nonfederal sectors was \$12.4 trillion, and federal debt was \$3.8 trillion.

Figures on the growth and level of debt are found in tables D.1 through D.3. Tables that show financial flows, amounts outstanding, and selected sector balance sheets are included in the remaining pages of this release.

### Growth of Domestic Nonfinancial Debt<sup>1</sup>

Percentage changes; quarterly data are seasonally adjusted annual rates

	Total	Federal	Nonfederal			
			Total	Households	Business	State and local govts.
1993	5.0	8.3	3.8	5.3	1.5	6.0
1994	4.6	4.7	4.6	7.6	4.1	-4.0
1995	5.4	4.1	5.9	7.8	6.7	-4.6
1996	5.2	4.0	5.7	7.5	5.3	-.6
1997	5.1	.6	6.7	6.5	7.3	5.3
1998	6.3	-1.4	8.8	8.9	9.2	7.2
1997:Q1	4.5	1.7	5.5	6.5	5.2	1.6
:Q2	4.2	-1.1	6.1	6.3	6.3	4.0
:Q3	5.6	.8	7.3	6.9	7.7	6.7
:Q4	5.7	1.1	7.3	5.6	9.0	8.4
1998:Q1	6.0	-.8	8.2	8.0	8.4	8.4
:Q2	6.0	-1.9	8.6	8.2	9.4	6.9
:Q3	5.5	-3.6	8.4	7.9	9.3	6.2
:Q4	7.1	.7	9.0	10.2	8.3	6.4

1. Changes shown are on an end-of-period basis and may differ from month-average data in the H.6 release.

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## Flow of Funds Accounts, Fourth Quarter 1998

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This publication presents the flow of funds accounts for 1998:Q4.

**Data revisions and other changes.** The statistics shown in these tables reflect use of new or revised source data. Most significant revisions appear in recent quarters; however, new source information resulted in changes to data for earlier periods. The revisions include the following:

1. Data for insurance and pension reserves of the federal government (tables F.106, L.106, F.225, and L.225) were expanded to include the reserves of the Foreign Service Retirement and Disability Fund, the Judicial Retirement Fund, the Military Retirement Fund, and the Federal Employees Group Life Insurance Fund. The change ensures consistent treatment of government employee pension and insurance funds in the accounts. The effect of the revision was to increase the liabilities of the federal government sector and to raise the assets of the household sector by equal amounts. The effect on quarterly flows in the sectors was quite small.

2. In the private pension funds sector (tables F.119 and L.119), data have been benchmarked to aggregates from the U.S. Internal Revenue Service/Department of Labor/Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation Form 5500 filed for plan year 1995. In addition, the retirement annuity accounts of the College Retirement Equities Fund (CREF) have been merged into the private pension funds sector. Previously, such assets had been in the direct holdings of the households and nonprofit organizations sector. The revisions affected data from 1980:Q1 onward.

3. Two supplemental tables have been added to the release. Tables F.106.c and L.106.c present assets and liabilities of federal, state, and local government entities in the United States on a consolidated basis. The sector statements for the federal government (tables F.106 and L.106) and for state and local governments (F.105 and L.105) will continue to be published separately.

### **Explanatory notes for tables D.1, D.2, and D.3.**

Domestic debt comprises credit market funds borrowed by U.S. entities from both domestic and foreign sources, while foreign debt represents amounts borrowed by foreign financial and nonfinancial entities in U.S. markets only. Financial sectors consist of government-sponsored enterprises, federally related mortgage pools, and private financial institutions. Credit market debt consists of debt securities, mortgages, bank loans, commercial paper, consumer credit, U.S. government loans, and other loans and advances; it excludes trade debt, loans for the purpose of carrying securities, and funds raised from equity sources.

Growth rates in table D.1 are calculated by dividing seasonally adjusted flows from table D.2 by seasonally adjusted levels at the end of the previous period from table D.3. Seasonally adjusted levels in flow of funds statistics are derived by carrying forward year-end levels by seasonally adjusted flows. Growth rates calculated from changes in unadjusted levels printed in table L.2 can differ from those in table D.1.

**Relation of Flows to Outstandings.** Estimates of financial assets and liabilities outstanding are linked to data on flows. However, figures on outstandings contain discontinuities or breaks in series that could affect analysis of particular relationships over time. Specifically, outstandings in the flow of funds accounts are related to the flows in the following way:

$$\text{Outstanding}_t = \text{Outstanding}_{t-1} + \text{Flow}_t + \text{Discontinuity}_t$$

where "t" is the time period.

Discontinuities result from changes in valuation, breaks in source data, and changes in definitions. For most series, the value of the discontinuity is zero for nearly all time periods. However, in a few instances, the discontinuity is nonzero for almost all time periods, or is quite large in a particular quarter, such as a period when there is a sharp increase or decrease in equity prices or a major break in source data.

The discontinuities in a series can distort estimated rates of growth in assets and liabilities between periods. In order to minimize these distortions, percentage changes in assets and liabilities in flow of funds releases should be calculated in the following manner:

$$\text{Percentage change}_t = (\text{Flow}_t / \text{Outstanding}_{t-1}) * 100$$

**Preliminary Estimates.** Figures shown for the most recent quarter in these tables are based on preliminary and incomplete information. A summary list of the principal sources of information available when the latest quarter's data were compiled is provided in a table following this introduction. The distinction between "available" data and "missing" data is not between final and preliminary versions of data, but rather between those source estimates that are fully ready when the latest quarterly publication is compiled and those that are not yet completed. However, the items that are shown as available are, in general, also preliminary in the sense that they are subject to revision by source agencies.

**Margins of Uncertainty.** Flow of funds statistics are subject to uncertainties resulting from measurement errors in source data, incompatibilities among data from different sources, potential revisions in both financial and nonfinancial series, and incomplete data in parts of the accounts. The size of these uncertainties cannot be quantified in precise statistical terms, but allowance for them is explicitly made throughout the accounts by the inclusion of "discrepancies" for various sectors and instrument types. A discrepancy for a sector is the difference between its measured sources of funds and its measured uses of funds. For an instrument category, a discrepancy is the difference between measured funds borrowed through the financial instrument and measured funds lent through that instrument. The size of such discrepancies relative to the main asset or liability components is one indication of the quality of source data, especially on an annual basis. For quarterly data, differences in seasonal adjustment procedures for financial and nonfinancial components of the accounts sometimes result in discrepancies that cancel in annual data.

**Availability of Data.** Flow of funds statistics are updated about nine weeks following the end of a quarter. This publication--the Z.1 release--is available from the Board's Publications Services. Flow of funds data are also available electronically through the Internet at the following location:

<http://www.federalreserve.gov/releases/Z1>

and through the Economic Bulletin Board of the Department of Commerce.

Data from the flow of funds accounts are also available on 3-1/2 inch diskettes. The diskettes contain quarterly data beginning in 1952, organized in files that correspond to the tables published in this release. One diskette contains the seasonally adjusted flows, a second diskette contains unadjusted flows, and a third diskette contains quarterly outstandings, which are not seasonally adjusted. In addition, the third diskette contains quarterly data for the debt tables (tables D.1, D.2, and D.3) and available balance sheet tables and supplemental tables, as well as monthly data from January 1955 onward for the monthly debt aggregate published in the Board's H.6 statistical release, "Money Stock, Liquid Assets, and Debt Measures."

**Subscription Information.** The Federal Reserve Board charges for subscriptions to all statistical releases. Inquiries for releases or the diskettes should be directed to:

Publications Services, Stop 127  
Board of Governors  
of the Federal Reserve System  
20th Street and Constitution Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20551  
(202) 452-3244

A *Guide to the Flow of Funds Accounts* is available. The 670-page *Guide* explains in detail how the U.S. financial accounts are prepared and the principles underlying the accounts.

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## Availability of Data for Latest Quarter

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	<u>Available at time of publication</u>	<u>Major items missing</u>
1. National income and product accounts (NIPA)	Preliminary estimates, seasonally adjusted, for 1998:Q4; unadjusted flows through 1997.	Unadjusted flows since 1997; corporate profits for 1998:Q4.
2. Households and nonprofit organizations sector (tables F.100 and L.100)	Estimates for this sector are largely residual and derived from data for other sectors. Availability of data depends on schedules for other sectors. Data for consumer credit, which are estimated directly, are available through 1998:Q4.	
3. Nonfarm nonfinancial corporate business (tables F.102 and L.102)	<i>Quarterly Financial Report (QFR)</i> of the Census Bureau through 1998:Q3; Internal Revenue Service <i>Statistics of Income</i> data through 1995; securities offerings, mortgages, bank loans, commercial paper, and other loans through 1998:Q4.	<i>Statistics of Income</i> data since 1995; QFR data for 1998:Q4.
4. Nonfarm noncorporate business (tables F.103 and L.103)	Internal Revenue Service <i>Statistics of Income</i> data through 1995; bank and finance company loans and mortgage borrowing through 1998:Q4.	<i>Statistics of Income</i> data since 1995.
5. Farm business (tables F.104 and L.104)	Mortgages, bank loans, loans from government-sponsored enterprises, U.S. government loans to farms, and equity in government-sponsored enterprises through 1998:Q4; preliminary data for checkable deposits and currency and trade payables through 1998.	Data for consumption of fixed capital and undistributed profits since 1997.

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6. State and local governments (tables F.105 and L.105)	Gross offerings and retirements of municipal securities, deposits at banks, holdings of mortgages, and nonmarketable U.S. government securities issues through 1998:Q4; selected financial assets through 1997:Q2 from the <i>Comprehensive Annual Financial Reports</i> of state and local governments that account for most of the holdings of the sector, and data from Standard & Poor's on local government investment pools.	Selected financial asset items since 1997:Q2.
7. Federal government (tables F.106 and L.106)	Data from the <i>Monthly Treasury Statement of Receipts and Outlays</i> through 1998:Q4; data from the Federal Financing Bank through 1998:Q4; Treasury data for loan programs through 1998:Q4.	None.
8. Rest of the world (U.S. international transactions) (tables F.107 and L.107)	Balance of payments data through 1998:Q4; NIPA estimates, data from bank Reports of Condition, and Treasury International Capital System data through 1998:Q4.	None.
9. Monetary authority (tables F.108 and L.108)	All data through 1998:Q4.	None.
10. Commercial banking (tables F.109 through F.113 and tables L.109 through L.113).	All data through 1998:Q4 for U.S.-chartered commercial banks, foreign banking offices in the U.S., bank holding companies, and commercial banks in U.S.-affiliated areas.	Data since 1997 for branches of domestic commercial banks located in U.S.-affiliated areas.
11. Savings institutions (tables F.114 and L.114)	All data through 1998:Q4.	None.
12. Credit unions (tables F.115 and L.115)	All data through 1998:Q4.	None.
13. Bank personal trusts and estates (tables F.116 and L.116)	All data through 1997.	Data since 1997:Q4.
14. Life insurance companies (tables F.117 and L.117)	All data through 1998:Q3; preliminary data for 1998:Q4.	Final data for 1998:Q4.
15. Other insurance companies (tables F.118 and L.118)	All data through 1998:Q3; preliminary data for 1998:Q4.	Final data for 1998:Q4.

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16. Private pension funds (including FERS Thrift Savings Plan) (tables F. 119 and L.119)	Quarterly data through 1998:Q4; Internal Revenue Service/ Department of Labor/Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation Form 5500 data through 1995.	Form 5500 data since 1995.
17. State and local government employee retirement funds (tables F.120 and L.120)	All data through 1998:Q3.	Data for 1998:Q4.
18. Money market mutual funds (tables F.121 and L.121)	All data through 1998:Q4.	None.
19. Mutual funds (tables F.122 and L.122)	All data through 1998:Q4.	None.
20. Closed-end funds (tables F.123 and L.123)	All data through 1997.	Data since 1997.
21. Government-sponsored enterprises (tables F.124 and L.124)	Balance sheet data for FHLBs, Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac, FCS, FICO, REFCORP, and Sallie Mae through 1998:Q4.	None.
22. Federally related mortgage pools (tables F.125 and L.125)	All data through 1998:Q4.	None.
23. Issuers of asset-backed securities (ABSs) (tables F.126 and L.126)	All data from Trepp/PSA Information Services of the Muller Data Corporation and data for private mortgage pools, consumer credit, business loans, student loans, consumer leases, and trade credit securitization through 1998:Q4.	None.
24. Finance companies (tables F.127 and L.127)	All data through 1998:Q4.	None.
25. Mortgage companies (tables F.128 and L.128)	Mortgage data through 1998:Q1.	Data since 1998:Q1.
26. Real estate investment trusts (REITs) (tables F.129 and L.129)	Data through 1998:Q3; preliminary data for 1998:Q4.	Final data for 1998:Q4.
27. Security brokers and dealers (tables F.130 and L.130)	Data for firms filing FOCUS reports through 1998:Q4; data for firms filing FOGS reports through 1998:Q3.	Data for firms filing FOGS reports since 1998:Q3.
28. Funding corporations (tables F.131 and L.131)	Estimates for this sector are largely residual and derived from data for other sectors.	